allow me, strengthen his "assertion" that mechanics who are receiving 30s. per week may contrive to save a trifle out of that sum, which, in the course of a few years, would accumulate to something important. It is well known that in the country a carpenter, or mason, seldom gets more than 22s. per week, and yet I know many a man, with a wife and two or three children, who lives respectably and contrives to save a trifle out of that; and there are many young men who, with 20s. per week, save a sum which would scarcely be credited. But they are, of course, steady and economical; they are not addicted to morning drams, nor do they spend their evenings and Sundays in dissipation at the alehouse; and while you would see them attired with good and enduring apparel, you would not see in their dress an attempt to mimic the folly of some above them. Now, if my fellow-workmen would study the first principles of *economics* as well as "mechanics;" if they would see what they could do with, and what they could do without, they would find that their present wages, which, in my judgment, are not at all a just and equitable remuneration for their skill and labour could be used, so as to put them in a much more respectable position than that in which too many, alas! are now to be found. That happiness which is sought ineffectually at the tavern, may certainly be found at the reading-room, or in the private study of those great principles which stamp the building art with such interest and importance. Self-culture, mental discipline, the development of the finer feelings of humanity, will doubtless make us better and happier men, if it will not make us better mechanics. It is only by making the best possible use we can of our present means that we can hope for a better future. Let our skill and intelligence, together with a high moral influence, solicit a more equitable adjustment of our time and wages, not—any farther than can be avoided—our poverty and destitution demand it. Of all reforms, individual reform is the most valuable, and is the surest and safest road to governmental reform.

A YOUNG CARPENTER.

BUILDERS' RIGHTS AND FOLLIES.

TENDERS, ST PETER'S CHURCH, CHESTER.

YOU will much oblige several individuals by inserting, in your valuable paper, the following note respecting the estimating for a new gallery, and three new windows, in St. Peter's Church, Chester, in the decision on which there is something too much savouring of unfairness, to be passed over unexplained. A number of respectable tradesmen were invited to give in tenders. The two lowest tenders were from first, a citizen of thirty-five years' standing, and, secondly, a builder who had done the whole of the carpenter's and joiner's work at the new station, and many other large works.

The last was invited by Mr. Harrison, the architect, who, unsolicited, sent him the plans and specification, desiring him to give a tender. He complied with the architect's request, and gave in an amount 27*l.* lower than the *accepted* tender. The public and the two lowest competitors are at a loss to account for such a digression from fair play. If the Committee have a surplus fund at their command, will there be any impropriety in allowing the unsuccessful competitors a fair remunerative per centage for their trouble, expense, and loss of time, in taking off the quantities, and estimating for the works?

TWO OF THE VICTIMS.

Amounts of the Tenders.

Blower	£320	0
Royle	239	0
Ingram	235	0
Hughes	230	0
Harrison	210	0
Bellis and Williams (accepted)	197	0
Wynn	178	10
Freeman	170	0

LOWTON CHURCH, LANCASHIRE.

To show the state of the contract system in the provinces, I beg to send you the following particulars. The parish church of Lowton (Lancashire) had to be painted outside, and papers were printed and distributed in four or five townships: the several estimates ran thus—

No. 1	£13	0	0
„ 2	9	6	0
„ 3	8	0	0
„ 4	7	0	0
„ 5	4	15	0

The lowest estimate was accepted.

There is much business done upon this principle: men who have nothing to lose compete with respectable tradesmen, send in one contract after another, always doing the work lower, and gain much trade in a short time. The system tells its own tale, and their goods are brought to the hammer, and yet there are those who will come forward, and will offer them sympathy, and say—"Poor fellow, he worked hard when he had it to do, but did not take sufficient care of himself, for we know he worked very low;" and they, under the impression that another body of men are "dear," employ this "cheap" man, and recommend him to their friends out of charity. What a pity but that they could see behind the scene, and find out the motives actuating such proceedings,—proceedings not only morally wrong and unjust, but dishonest! If the multitude acting upon the principle of "cheap work" would look a little to the private character, it might convince them that high chargers are not necessarily knaves, but that the very low chargers must be fools,—*i. e.* to work for less than it costs them,—or knaves, to use material for which they never intend to pay. This is no exaggerated case, but a simple every day fact, and one which I could illustrate by many examples that have come under my own eye.

A. B.

Estimates for the Leicester Cemetery, under Messrs. Hamilton and Medland.

Greenock, Leicester	£9,940
Booth, ditto	9,820
Wykes, ditto	8,575
Burton, London	8,294
Herbert, Leicester	7,700
Farrow, ditto	7,073
Norman, ditto	7,036
Clarke, Sheffield	6,806
Piper, London	6,930
Broadbent and Hawley, Leicester	6,651
Hull, Holland, and Smith, Leicester (accepted)	6,597

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

THE returns called for by the House of Lords, on the motion of Lord Brougham, are to embrace a return of the share capital, dividends, costs, receipts, expenditure, and other accounts, of every railway in the three kingdoms, and will be the most comprehensive, searching, and complete exposure possible, so far, at least, as the order itself intends it to be.——It is stated, in reference to the Eastern Counties accounts and investigations, that the sum of 62*l.* per share has been paid as dividends from 1845 to 1849, while the earnings applicable to dividends (nothing, however, having been allowed for wear and tear of locomotive stock,) have only reached 28*l.* per share for the same period of four years. Arrangements are said to be in progress for working this line by contract instead of by the Company itself, and it is alleged that the saving to the Company thus will be 90,000*l.* a-year.——A letter, lately published, as to the doings of others than the noted prime mover of 'directors,' adds another argument in favour of an improved system of auditing railway accounts. One object of the writer is to show that shareholders are kept in ignorance of the real state of things until fresh calls for money become necessary; and that, as he contends, is the case with the Chester and Holyhead Company, their original capital is to be mortgaged, and even sacrificed, in favour of what are called "preference shares." He states that there has been a sytematic concealment of the amount required to complete the undertaking, and that the traffic and receipts are utterly insufficient to make any return on the original capital, while the directors are assuring the shareholders that the information they have received has "tended to establish the merits of the Chester and Holyhead Railway as an investment." The writer shows that 80 miles of the railway are open out of 84, and that the gap of 4 miles at the Menai-bridge is travelled by a well-appointed omnibus. "If, then, they do not get all the traffic they should, it is owing to other causes than the so-called partial opening. It is because travellers go cheaper another way. Now, credulous shareholders," he adds, "look to your liabilities, as swelled by gross mismanagement. Capital required, 4,427,600*l.*, will require for interest 232,702*l.*, or upwards of 4,000*l.* per week;" while the total profits, he contends, are but 20,800*l.* per annum, or "400*l.* per week to pay interest amounting to 4,000*l.* per week." Among other charges against the directors he brings that of "deluding the shareholders with the prospect of 6 per cent. dividend on the original shares, whereas they can get no dividend at all."——The tender of Messrs. Abbot and Co., of the Gateshead Park Ironworks, for the cast and malleable ironwork required for the shed and roof of the central station in Newcastle has been accepted; also that of Mr. C. J. Pearson, Gateshead, for the minor station at the eastern entrance to Newcastle; and of Messrs. Wilson and Gibson, for the small station in Halfmoon-lane, Gateshead.——On 28th ult., the ironwork of the High Level Bridge was brought into connection from end to end. By 1st August, according to the *Gateshead Observer*, it will stand complete.——The only unlet portion of the Dumfries and Carlisle line was lately advertised for construction. The length embraced in these contracts is stated to be about 14 miles, extending from Old Cumnock to Sanquhar. Great exertions are making to complete the line between Dumfries and Thornhill, and the contractor expects to have it ready for opening in July next.——In East Lothian, such are the effects of the opened railways on farming that there is a rise of rent about 10 per cent. The railways enable the farmer to send his grain crops to Edinburgh to compete with the farmers around the city; he is able to have manure cheaper; the whole of his crops and live stock can be sent at less expense to market, and the live stock in much better condition. Mr. Smith, of Deanston, in his evidence before the House of Commons, gives it as his opinion that all good land from ten to fifty miles from a large town, on a line of railway, will be worth 10s. more per acre.

METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

A GENERAL court was held on Thursday, the 3rd inst., at the Court-house, Greek-street, Soho-square; the Right Hon. the Earl of Carlisle in the chair.

The Jurisdiction of the Commission.—A report was presented from the special committee appointed to consider the conduct of John Merry, the foreman of pumps and hose, who was suspended for alleged misconduct in the use of that apparatus in Westminster, and who, for the nuisance occasioned, had been fined 10s. by Mr. Burrell, the sitting magistrate. The committee now reported that they had fully investigated the subject, and that the great balance of the evidence obtained was in favour of Merry; that the temporary nuisance was occasioned by a defective hose, which was immediately replaced by a proper one; and that large quantities of the deodorising fluid were used in the course of the operation. Therefore they recommended that the order for his suspension should be withdrawn, and that he be restored to his employment.

Mr. Hertslet, the clerk, in reference to this subject, reported, that since the last court a request having been received from Messrs. Evans, of Parliament-street, for the relief of a cesspool on their premises by the pump and hose,—on their servants proceeding to the place with their apparatus, they were seized by the authorities of St. Margaret's parish, who expressed their determination to do so on every occasion where it was used in the daytime, viz., before eleven o'clock at night, or after five in the morning.

Mr. Lawes said this subject had occupied the attention of the Bye-Laws Committee, and they thought that to give the court a greater probability of success in their appeal against the magistrate's conviction on this subject, they should make a bye-law in reference to it. If the court at present possessed the power of cleansing cesspools in the daytime, that power would be strengthened by making the bye-law. The Public Health Act regulated the time and manner of emptying cesspools, by day as well as night, and it was highly necessary for the public interests that the Sewers Commissioners should exercise a similar power. He thought the best course was to give notice of a bye-law, and at the proper time to move its confirmation. He concluded by proposing a resolution to that effect.

Mr. Bullar seconded the motion.

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